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BOROUGH OF CHARD

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the Year ended 31st December, 1939.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Chard.

GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in submitting to you the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for 1939. It is the 27th of my series and my last in that capacity. Looking back to my younger days I note with pleasure much improvement in the general health of the community, small though my part in it may have been. Spectacular as have been the advances in Surgery, those in medicine and midwifery have also been large. We are living longer and more healthy lives. In Chard, in particular, I am pleased to have been associated with you in such matters as improved public water supply, better housing —to mention only two such matters.

I thank you for your hearty co-operation in measures required for the public health and wish my successor as M.O.H., Dr. Hague, as pleasant and happy an association as mine has been.

Yours faithfully,

ROBT. SUTHERLAND.

October, 1940.

SECTION A.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area, 920 acres.

Registrar General's estimate of the Resident Population, mid-1939, 4,359.

Registrar General's estimate of the average population appropriate to the calculation of death rates, 4,405.

Number of inhabited houses, according to rate books, 1,323.

Rateable value, £25,889.

Sum represented by a penny rate, £98.

Social Conditions.—Little change from 1938. A leather tannery has been started in Combe Street, and the disused lace net factory has been put to other uses. There was not much unemployment.

Extracts from Vital Statistics

	M.	F.	Totals
Live Births—Legitimate ...	28	24	52
" Illegitimate ...	3	—	3
Full Total, 55.			
Still Births—Legitimate ...	—	—	—
" Illegitimate ...	—	—	—
Full Total, Nil.			

Birth rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population—12.62.

Still Birth rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births—Nil.

Deaths.

Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated average population, 14.07.

Altered by comparability factor, however, it is reduced to 10.83.

Deaths from Puerperal causes, Nil.

No. 29 Puerperal Sepsis Deaths ... Nil.

No. 30 Other Puerperal causes Deaths Nil.

Total ... ... 0.

Death rate of infants under 1 year of age:

All Infants per 1,000 live births ... 18.18

Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births 18.77

Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births ... ... Nil.

Deaths from Cancer (all ages) ... 12

" " Measles (all ages) ... Nil.

" " Whooping Cough (all Ages ... ... Nil.

" " Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) 1

An outbreak of measles such as occurs every four or five years was experienced in the spring and some of the schools were temporarily closed in consequence. Whooping cough also was prevalent at the same time.

Deaths: Total 62. Male 34. Female 28.

Causes of Death

	M.	F.
Influenza	1	1
T.B. Resp. System	2	0
Other T.B.	1	0
Cancer	5	7
Cerebral hæmorrhage	0	2
Heart Disease	7	5
Other Circulatory Disease ...	1	0
Bronchitis	0	4
Pneumonia (all forms) ...	1	0
Diarrhœa, under 1 year ...	0	1
Nephritis, Acute and Chr. ...	2	1
Senility	6	6
Suicide	1	0
Other violence	1	0
Other defined disease	6	1

SECTION B.

General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

Public Health Officers were:—

Medical Officer of Health,

R. SUTHERLAND, M.B., Ch.B.
(Part time only.)

Sanitary Inspector,

P. H. WEBB, M.Inst., M. & Cy.E.
(Part time only.)

Assistant Sanitary Inspector,

A. L. LARCOMBE.
(Part time only.)

There are no changes to be recorded re laboratory facilities, ambulance, nursing in the homes, clinics and treatment centres or hospitals.

SECTION C.

Sanitary Services of the Area.

Water.—No change has been made in the public water supply. Samples submitted to the County laboratories periodically have all been recorded as "No evidence of contamination and the results are satisfactory."

Drainage and Sewerage:—No alteration.

Rivers and Streams:—No special action required.

Public Cleansing:—No change.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

Inspection of sewerage and drainage...	211
Inspections for nuisances	39
Informal notices served	63
Drainage tests and inspections ...	104
Houses disinfected	26
Dairies and cowsheds inspections ...	21
Waterworks inspections	127
Slaughter house inspections	326
Rivers and streams	No action required.
Shops and offices	Satisfactory.
Smoke abatement	2

SECTION D.

Housing Particulars:

Number of new houses erected during the year—

(i) By Local Authority,
With State Assistance—
(a) Rehousing under Housing Act, 1936 ... ... Nil.
(b) Overcrowding ... ... Nil.
(c) Other ... ... Nil.

Without State Assistance—

(ii) By other bodies or persons—
(a) With State Assistance ... Nil.
(b) Without State Assistance ... Nil.

I. Housing Inspections:—

1 (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under P.H. or Housing Acts) ... 31

(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose 83

2 (a) Number of dwelling houses (included under Sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under H. Con. Reg. 1925 and 1932 18

(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose 39

(c) Number of houses in which no action was found necessary ... 3

3 Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation 5

4 Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ... 10

11. Housing Action:—

(a) Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers 2

(b) Number of houses demolished voluntarily or in consequence of informal action 1

III. Action under Statutory Powers during the year:—

A **Proceedings under Sections 9, 10, and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936—**

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ... 3

(2) Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notice:

(a) By owners ... ... Nil.

(b) By local authority in default of owners ... ... Nil.

B **Proceedings under Public Health Acts—**

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 11

(2) Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices—

(a) By Owners 11

(b) By Local Authority ... Nil.

C **Proceedings under Sections 11, 13 and 26 of the Housing Act, 1936—**

Nil.

D **Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936—**

Nil.

Housing Act, 1936. Overcrowding—

(a) (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year 8

(ii) Number of families dwelling therein 11

(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein 41

(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year 5

(c) (i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year ... 11

(ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases 67

(d) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding 1

(e) Any other particulars with respect to overcrowding conditions upon which the M.O.H. may consider it desirable to report.

Since the outset of the war there has been a considerable and increasing number of evacuees, especially children, in the Borough.

SECTION E.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

(a) **Milk Supply—**

Number of producers on the Register 11

Number of distributors on the Register divided as follows:

(1) Distributors only 10

(2) Distributors who are also producers 2

Number of Licences given to Graded Milk distributors ... ... Nil.

(b) **Meat and other foods—**

Meat Supervision:

Slaughterhouses Licenced 3. Registered 1. The Slaughterhouses are in good condition and kept clean. All slaughtering is now carried out at the Government Slaughterhouse.

Carcases inspected:

Bovine	408
Calves	91
Sheep and Lambs	713
Pigs	802

All diseases except Tuberculosis. Whole carcases condemned:

Bovine	Nil.
Pigs	1
Sheep	1

Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned:

Bovine	32
Calves	2
Sheep and Lambs	63
Pigs	5

Tuberculosis only:—

Whole carcase condemned:

Bovine	5
Pigs	3

Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned:

Cattle	15
Calves	1
Pigs	29

(c) **Adulteration, &c.—**

Local action taken ... ... Nil.

SECTION F.

Prevalence of and Control over Infectious and other Diseases—

1. As already stated cases of measles and whooping cough were abundant. The former in the spring and the latter in the autumn. German measles was also prevalent.

Notifiable Diseases

(Other than Tuberculosis).

Disease	Total cases notified	Cases admitted to Isolation Hospital	Total Deaths
Small Pox	Nil	Nil	Nil
Scarlet Fever	4	Nil	Nil
Diphtheria	1	Nil	Nil
Enteric Fever (including Para-typhoid)	Nil	Nil	Nil
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	Nil	Nil
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	Nil	Nil
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis	Nil	Nil	Nil
Dysentery	Nil	Nil	Nil
Malaria	Nil	Nil	Nil
Pneumonia	3	Nil	Nil
Acute Poliamyelitis	Nil	Nil	Nil
Encephalitis Lethargica	Nil	Nil	Nil
Other diseases Notifiable locally, e.g.—			
Chicken Pox	Nil	Nil	Nil
Erysipelas	1	Nil	Nil
Whooping Cough	25	Nil	Nil
Measles	2	Nil	Nil

(Notifiable in latter part of year only).

Tuberculosis

Ages.	New Cases Respiratory. M.	F.	New Cases Non-Respir. M.	F.	Deaths Respiratory. M.	F.	Deaths Non-Respir. M.	F.
0 to 1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1 to 5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5 to 15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15 to 25	—	2	—	—	—	—	1 (age	
25 to 35	2	1	2	—	1	—unkno'n		
35 to 45	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45 to 55	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
55 to 65	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 & upwards	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	4	3	2	0	2	0	1	0

All tuberculosis deaths had been notified beforehand as suffering from tuberculosis.